(b) the reasons for not applying the same concept to the substitute drugs, similar to essential ones used in treatment of a particular disease;

(c) whether there is any scientific basis for drug declared as essential; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKHSMI): (a) and (b) Price Control orders in respect of drugs were issued in 1963, 1966 and 1968 under the Defence of India Act. After the enactment of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (10 of 1955) and with 'drugs' having been declared as an Essential Commodity under the Essential Commodities Act, the Drugs (Price Control) Orders are being promulgated from time to time since 1970, under Section 3 of the EC Act. Presently the Drugs (Price Control) Order, (DPCO) 1985 is in force.

Currently Drugs are placed under price control based on the criteria mentioned in 'Modification in Drug Policy, 1986', announced in September, 1994.

The Department of Chemicals and Petro-Chemicals has also drafted a new Pharmaceutical Policy, 2006 wherein the concept of keeping the National List of Essential Medicine, 2003 under price control has been envisaged.

(c) and (d) The National List of Essential Medicines is formulated keeping in view the methodology adopted by WHO. The criteria considered suitable for identifying medicines in the list included consideration of disease burden; information on the efficacy, safety and comparative cost effectiveness of drugs, preferences for single compounds, cost of treatment (and not merely unit cost of medicines); and available health delivery infrastructure.

AIDS testing centres across the country

3775. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the National AIDS Control Organization has decided to open more testing centres across the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the annual sentinel surveillance conducted in 706 sites across the country has shown 5.2 million people living with HIV, an increase of 72,000 against the previous year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) Currently, NACO has established 2672 counselling and testing centres throughout the country of them 380 are in medical colleges, 842 district hospitals/maternity hospitals and 1550 in community health centres/Public Health Centre (PHC.).

In the next phase of the National AIDS Control Programme it is envisaged to have voluntary counselling and testing centres established in all community health centres and 24 hour primary health centres.

(c) and (d) As per 2005 Annual Sentinel Surveillance Report, there are 5.206 million HIV infection in the country whereas, the number of person with HIV infections in the country during 2004 were 5.134 million. Out of estimated adults living with HIV, 38.4% are female and 57% are from rural background. On average 0.88% ante-natal mothers, 5.66% of STD patients, 8.44% of female sex workers & 10.16% of injecting drug users were infected with HIV.

Financial upgradation under ACP scheme

3776. SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ACP scheme is being implemented in all departments/institutions under the administrative control of his Ministry;

(b) whether there have been cases of discrimination in respect of the Hindi Officers working in Central Research Institute, Kasauli who have been denied financial upgradation under the ACP scheme;

(c) if so, whether the responsibility will be fixed for the inordinate delay of more than three years in granting this upgradation;

(d) by when ACP will be given to the Hindi Officers of CRI;